

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 H-02 SS-15 INR-07 EURE-00 SSO-00

INRE-00 /050 W

----- 093112

O R 301458Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7142

INFO EC BRUSSELS 1838

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CSCE, GR

SUBJECT: CSCE BASKET II: CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

REF: STATE 233202

1. FOR A COUNTRY AT GREECE'S LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT, THE COLLECTION AND PUBLICATION OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS ARE GENERALLY QUITE GOOD, BOTH QUANTITATIVELY AND QUALITATIVELY. THE PERIODICITY IS NORMALLY CONSISTENT, AND, WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS, THE TIMELINESS CANNOT BE CRITICIZED. THERE ARE SELDOM LONG DELAYS IN SCHEDULED RELEASE DATES WITHOUT VALID EXPLANATIONS. SUFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FOR MARKET AND CROP ASSESSMENTS AND FORECASTS, BOTH FROM PUBLISHED SOURCES OR, IF NECESSARY, FROM THE APPROPRIATE STATISTICAL SERVICES BEFORE PUBLICATION. WHERE RELEVANT, INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS ARE USED, SUCH AS THE UNITED NATION'S NATIONAL ACCOUNTING SYSTEM, THE IMF BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SYSTEM, AND THE SITC AND BTN TARIFF CLASSIFICATION. IN THE LAST FEW YEARS GREECE HAS BEEN STRIVING TO BRING ITS STATISTICAL STANDARDS UP TO THOSE IN THE ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIES, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF ACCELERATED ACCESSION TO THE EC. AN EXAMPLE OF THIS IS THE

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RECENT REVISION IN THE BANK OF GREECE'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

ACCOUNTS. KEPE, THE GOVERNMENT RESEARCH CENTER, IN ITS PREPARATION OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN HAS ALSO BEEN WORKING TO IMPROVE GREECE'S PLANNING AND FORECASTING CAPABILITIES.

2. AS IN ALL COUNTRIES, THERE REMAIN WEAK SPOTS IN BOTH THE AVAILABILITY AND ACCURACY OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION. IN GREECE'S CASE, THESE INCLUDE TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES, PERSONAL INCOME, PRODUCTIVITY, CAPACITY UTILIZATION, INVENTORIES, AND BUSINESS EXPECTATIONS. A RESEARCH INSTITUTE FINANCED BY PRIVATE FIRMS AND ORGANIZATIONS HAS RECENTLY BEEN ESTABLISHED TO FILL THE GAP OF INFORMATION ON PRIVATE ENTERPRISES SALES EXPECTATIONS AND PLANNED INVESTMENT, WHICH SHOULD IMPROVE FORECASTING FOR THE INDUSTRIAL AND RETAIL SECTOR. LABOR MARKET INDICATORS GIVE A PARTIAL PICTURE OF LABOR MARKET CONDITIONS BECAUSE THEY MEASURE ONLY URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE UNDEREMPLOYMENT IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR FOR WHICH STATISTICS ARE NOT COLLECTED AT ALL. NATIONAL INCOME FIGURES ARE PUBLISHED ONLY ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, WITH A FOUR MONTH LAG, WHICH MEANS THEY ARE USEFUL ONLY HISTORICALLY AND DO NOT HELP IN IDENTIFYING ECONOMIC TRENDS OR FORECASTING. PERSONAL INCOME, PRODUCTIVITY AND CAPACITY UTILIZATION STATISTICS ARE CURRENTLY NOT AVAILABLE.

3. UNDER THE CERP PUBLICATIONS PROGRAM THE EMBASSY PROCURES OVER 60 PUBLICATIONS OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS AND NARRATIVE EVERY YEAR. (A LIST OF THESE SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN THE DEPARTMENT). PRIMARY SOURCES ARE THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE, THE BANK OF GREECE, THE MINISTRY OF COORDINATION, AND KEPE, THE CENTER FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING AND RESEARCH, AND ON THE AGRICULTURAL SIDE THE AGRICULTURAL BANK OF GREECE, THE NATIONAL TOBACCO BOARD, THE HELLENIC COTTON BOARD, AND VARIOUS OTHER AGENCIES.

4. IN REFERENCE TO PARAGRAPH 4, REFTEL, THE FOLLOWING ARE THE MAJOR SOURCES OF STATISTICS BY CATEGORY AND THEIR FREQUENCY OF PUBLICATION. MOST CAN BE CONSIDERED TIMELY.

A. STATISTICS CONCERNING PRODUCTION, NATIONAL INCOME, BUDGET, CONSUMPTION, AND PRODUCTIVITY.
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(1) NATIONAL ACCOUNTS. MINISTRY OF COORDINATION AND PLANNING; NATIONAL ACCOUNTS OF GREECE (ANNUAL): ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BANK OF GREECE.

(2) PRODUCTION.

A. PRIMARY. NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE:

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS OF GREECE (ANNUAL); MONTHLY STATISTICAL BULLETIN; AGRICULTURAL BANK BULLETIN/PRICES (MONTHLY); AUTONOMOUS CurrANT ORGANIZATION (ASO) BULLETING (MONTHLY); HELLENIC COTTON BOARD BULLETING (MONTHLY); NATIONAL TOBACCO BOAD WEEKLY BULLETING OF TOBACCO SALES; TOBACCO MERCHANT'S FEDERATION MOMTHLY BULLETING;

B. SECONDARY. NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE:

"MONTHLY INFORMATION BULLETING" GIVES INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION INDICES, INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT, AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY BASED ON BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED; MONTHLY STATISTICAL BULLETIN; PERIODIC SURVEYS ON DIFFERENT SECTORS SUCH AS ANNUAL STATISTICAL SURVEY OF MINES, QUARRIES AND SALTERNS AND RESEARCH ON LABOR. COSTS IN MANUFACTURING: ANNUAL INDUSTRIAL SURVEY; CENSUS OF INDUSTRIAL, HANDICRAFT AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS (EVERY 6-9 YEARS)

C. TERTIARY. NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE: MONTHLY STATISTICAL BULLETING: CENSUS OF INDUSTRIAL, HANDICRAFT AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS (EVERY 6-9 YEARS)

(3) PRODUCTIVITY. DATA ARE NOT AVAILABLE.

(4) BUDGET. MINISTRY OF FINANCE: GENERAL BUDGETS, REGULAR AND INVESTMENT (ANNUALLY); BUDGET MESSAGE (ANNUALLY); NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE; PUBLIC FINANCE STATISTICS (ANNUALLY); STATISTICAL BULLETING OF PUBLIC FINANCE (QUARTERLY); MONTHLY STATISTICAL BULLETING.

B. FOREIGN TRADE. INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE BY PRODUCT, VOLUME AND VALUE AND BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION. MAIN PUBLICATIONS ARE: NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE; MONTHLY STATISTICAL BULLETING; STATISTICAL BULLETING OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOREIGN TRADE (QUARTERLY); FOREIGN TRADE OF GREECE (ANNUAL, DELAYED)

C. LAWS AND REGULATINS CONCERNING FOREIGN TRADE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE WITHIN A SHORT TIME AFTER THEY ARE PASSED OR PROMULGATED. THEY BECOME EFFECTIVE AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

D. THE FIVE YEAR PLAN, WHICH SETS OUT GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS A MEDIUM-TERM ECONOMIC FORECAST, IS PUBLISHED ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS AND REVISED PERIODICALLY.

E. A WIDE VARIETY OF COMMERCIAL DIRECTORIES, PUBLISHED MAINLY BY PRIVATE TRADE ORGANIZATIONS AND CONSULTING FIRMS,

ARE AVAILABLE IN GREECE AND ARE USEFUL IN ASSISTING BUSINESS-MEN IN COMMERCIAL CONTACTS. IN ADDITION, GREEK CORPORATIONS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO PUBLISH AN ANNUAL BALANCE SHEET. ANNUAL STATEMENTS FREQUENTLY ALSO INCLUDE REPORTS TO SHAREHOLDERS AND OTHER COMMERCIAL INFORMATION. THE MOST IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS ARE: FINANCIAL DIRECTORY OF GREEK COMPANIES (ANNUAL); HELLENIC-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DIRECTORY (EVERY TWO YEARS); PUBLIC SERVICES ORGANIZATION GUIDE (ANNUAL); GREEK SHIPPING DIRECTORY (ANNUAL); GREEK SHIPOWNERS REGISTER (ANNUAL); GREEK EXPORT DIRECTORY (IRREGULAR); THESSALONIKI FIAR CATALOGUE (ANNUAL); BUSINESS BOOK (IRREGULAR).

F. IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE, THE STATISTICAL YEAR-BOOK OF GREECE (ANNUAL) SUMMARIZES THE MAIN PUBLICATIONS OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE AND OTHER AGENCIES. IT IS VERY USEFUL FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES. THIS IS PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY OF EACH YEAR, WITH AT LEAST A ONE YEAR LAG IN THE DATA INCLUDED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS, ECONOMIC DATA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 SEP 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ATHENS10536
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760369-0178
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976095/aaaaadgk.tel
Line Count: 189
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 233202
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <10 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CSCE BASKET II: CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
TAGS: PFOR, GR, US, CSCE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006